

BRIGHT OUTLOOK

Flattering Prospects for the Salmon Market of the Ensuing Year.

The year 1902 has, generally speaking, been one of the best known for many years in the history of the canned salmon business, and but for the protracted strike in the anthracite coal districts there is little doubt that the amount of business done would have proved a record.

Salmon, as a staple article of food, has taken a great and permanent hold with all classes. The artisan, the mechanic, the factory operative, enjoys a variety in his diet equally with the millionaires, and a can of tasty salmon goes a long way toward making the laborer's frugal meal a dainty and enjoyable one. The soldier and the sailor vary the monotony of their mess rations with a can of the toothsome article. For picnic parties, for salad at dainty lunches, what is more appetizing than the nutritious and deliciously flavored Columbia river chinook? It is in the thousand and one different ways that canned salmon is called for and used by "all sorts and conditions of men" that the marvellous consumption is accounted for, and the prices of the different varieties being well within the reach of all classes, a regular and constantly increasing demand is insured. There is no doubt that the higher price of meats, both fresh and canned, have very materially helped to increase the demand for canned salmon. Then, again, the opening up of the Orient during the past few years has called for enormous quantities, and the shipment from Pacific coast ports by every outgoing trans-Pacific steamer has been very heavy.

In the home trade the consumption of canned salmon during the past few years has literally increased by leaps and bounds. It was thought at the close of the packing season in 1901 that the phenomenal pack of that year, amounting to considerably over five millions of cases would stagger the trade, but, so far from this being the condition, not only were prices made at the opening of the season well maintained right through until the time when they were named for the pack of 1902, but the bulk of the enormous pack was also taken out of first hands, and the small quantity carried over by the packers was, in proportion, out of all ratio to that of previous years.

In the fall of 1901 the trade throughout the country was induced to increase its normal stock of Puget sound sockeyes at the low price at which the enormous surplus pack of this variety was offered. This, notwithstanding they had, one and all, bought heavily earlier in the season, and sufficient for all ordinary requirements after making due allowance for a natural increase of business. The trade had, as stated, bought further quantities, which were treated and figured upon

as investments, and such in reality they proved to be, for, when prices of the 1902 pack of sockeyes were made in the summer of 1902, they were found to be 25 percent higher on the basis of one-pound tins than they were in 1901. This advance was owing to the great falling off, due entirely to natural causes, in the run of this description in 1902, the quantity packed being only about one-fourth of that of the previous season, or, in round figures, about 340,000 cases, as against nearly 1,250,000 cases in 1901.

On the Columbia river canners were fortunately enabled to lower the prices originally announced at the beginning of the season, and, by so doing, once more revived the interest of the trade in the justly celebrated chinook salmon. Three of four years ago, from circumstances which they could not control, Columbia river canners were compelled to raise their selling prices to a basis of \$1.50 per dozen for tins, and even higher, and the trade, which formerly used these unrivalled goods most extensively, found business in them falling off to a most alarming extent, many of the large jobbers who formerly easily disposed of 500 or 1000 cases finding their sales suddenly drop down to only a few cases, proving conclusively that what the public wants is a reasonably cheap article. In 1902, by getting prices down to a \$1.35 basis, they were enabled right at the very commencement of the season to sell every case they expected to pack, and for the last two or three months of 1902 not one case of first-grade Columbia river spring packed chinook salmon has been obtainable from first hands or from any packer on the river, many of whom could easily have sold several thousand cases more if they could have packed them. This goes to show that even at a moderately high retail selling price there is a sufficiently large portion of the salmon consuming public which appreciates the great difference between a choice, nutritious and delicately flavored Columbia river salmon, and the hard, dry, tough and coarse—though cheaper—Alaska fish, whose principal recommendation is its deep red color.

Alaska salmon has been, as usual, a good seller during the season of 1902, its cheapness bringing it within the range of the humblest working man, whose taste is necessarily, to a very great extent, governed by the state of his pocketbook. The total pack of Alaska salmon for the summer of 1902 aggregates nearly 1,500,000 cases, being an increase of about 250,000 cases over the pack of 1901, but the increase is in the medium and lower grades, the finest one showing a marked decrease over previous years.

The canned salmon market during

The salmon fisheries of the Columbia river, in the past 25 years, have produced \$75,000,000. As artificial propagation insures permanent supply, the value of the fisheries output will not diminish, but, rather, will increase, for the hatcheries will provide all the salmon that the markets demand. The amount of salmon handled by canneries and cold-storages on the Columbia river during 1902 was equivalent to more than 431,000 cases. The output of the canneries, fall and spring—351,574 cases—was worth, at Astoria, approximately \$2,000,000, while the output of the cold-storages—approximately 4,000,000 pounds—was worth, in the

1902 has been one of the best on record in many years. The demand from consumers has been exceedingly good. The large carry-over from 1901 has long since been absorbed, and, from information derived from the most authentic sources in all parts of the country, it is generally admitted that the wholesale trade will commence the new year with the smallest stocks ever carried over at time of taking inventories.

There have been no sudden and vio-

lent fluctuations in prices, which always tend to demoralize the market, and any slight increase which has taken place in selling values has been naturally caused by diminution of stocks, coupled with a strong inquiry from buyers for goods of the same description and grade. When the spring trade opens there will undoubtedly be some slight advance in prices, as there is undoubtedly not enough stock of the good salmon in first hands to supply the requirements of the trade until the

1903 pack is ready for delivery. It is, of course, impossible at this time to forecast what is likely to occur during the 1903 season, so far as regards prospects of packing go, but the general feeling of experts is that the Alaska pack will be about the same in quantity as in 1902, while that on Puget sound is a very open question—no salmon being so uncertain in the extent of the run as the sockeye. The year 1903 being the second after the phenomenal pack of 1901 it should, ac-

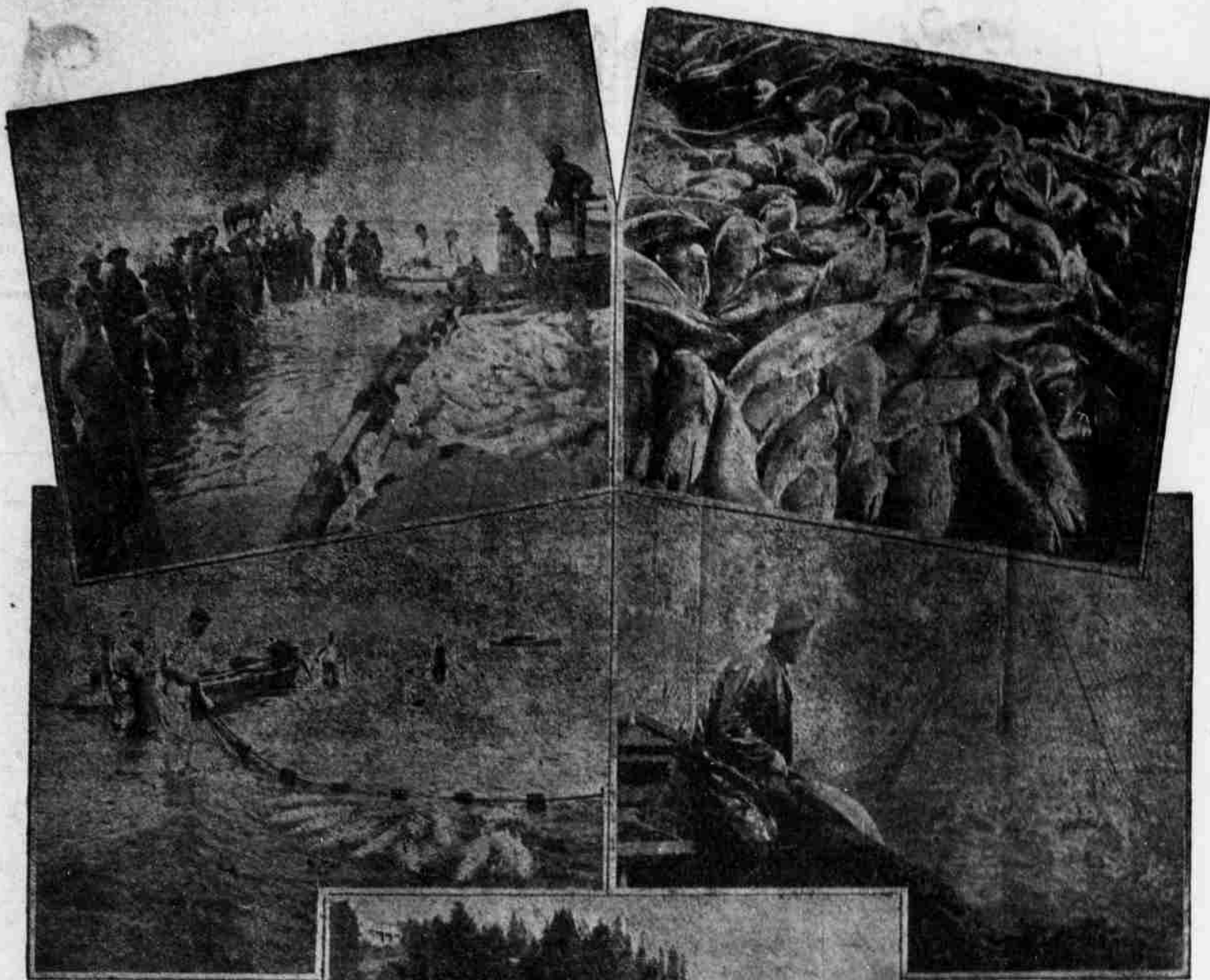
cording to history and general traditions, be lighter even than the 1902 pack, while on the other hand it may possibly exceed it.

The Columbia river is, thanks to the hatcheries, now yielding more salmon than ever before, but this increase is largely offset by the immense quantities now used for cold storage and packing processes.

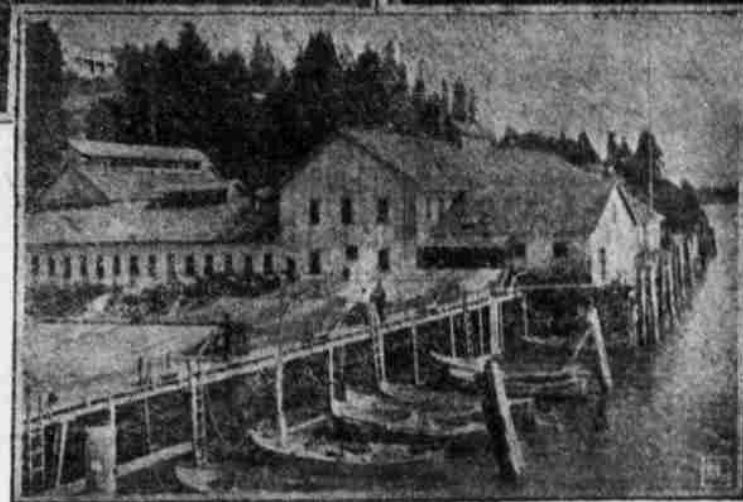
Cold storage has now become a very important factor in the salmon business and freezing plants have been and

are being erected at all suitable and available points. There is also a large and constantly increasing business in salted and pickled salmon for export, which it is thought must, in time, affect canning to a considerable extent. However, there are no doubt as many and as good fish in the sea as ever were caught, so that the home public need not be afraid of being deprived of its justly prized and favorite article of food—canned salmon—which is growing more and more in demand.

COLUMBIA RIVER



FISHING SCENES



foreign markets, about \$800,000. Counting the salmon taken for the fresh fish markets, the value of the output exceeded \$3,000,000. The number of cases canned, based on four dozen one-pound tins to the case, was as follows:

Pillar Rock Packing company	23,000
McGowan & Sons	27,000
Co-operative Packing company	26,843
Seufert Bros.	16,000
J. G. Mogler	21,575
Sanborn-Cutting Packing company	25,000
A. Booth Packing company	28,656
Columbia River Packers' association	147,000
F. M. Warren	87,000

Samuel Elmore & Company

Salmon Packers, Shippers and Commission Merchants

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Under the Well-Known Brands--Familiar the World Over

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